Fellowship in Prayer

"For a world united in prayer"

"O God who hast made the earth so fair
And written Thy glory in the heavens
Help us inwardly to respond to all that is outwardly true and beautiful
So that, as we pass through things temporal
We lose not the vision of things eternal."

Volume VII April, 1956 Number 2

OUR PURPOSE

"To promote the practice of prayer among *all* religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God, regardless of race, creed, or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth honesty, justice and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind."

* * *

FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

22 E. 29th Street New York 16, N.Y.

Volume VII April, 1956 Number 2

The POWER of PRAYER

Nobody knows the power of prayer
But Somebody must be listening there
With a friendly ear
for the heart that calls...
Someone Who knows when a sparrow falls.

Miracles lie in the power of prayer;
Faith that can banish the soul's despair!
Hope that can shine
like a holy light
And brighten the spirit's darkest night!

When earthly help is of no avail
There is one Friend Who will never fail;
Just lift your eyes—
the answer is there...
For nobody knows the power of prayer!

-- Nick Kenny.

* * *

WHEN DARKNESS COMES!

By W. J. Thompson, D.D.

New England is famous for many things, including memorable historical buildings. As one puts it — "Voices from the past seem to call from every highway and byway from Boston to the Border."

One such fascinating building is in Lancaster, New Hampshire. At the head of Main Street stands a large white house, framed in trees, and backed by wide fields. The oldest house in town, owned and occupied by the Holton family since 1810; and, before that, used as an inn and public meeting place, after having been built as a private residence by Major Wilder in 1780. The special claim to fame of this fine old house lies in a little known fact - its erection was begun on May 19, 1780, the memorable "dark day" of modern history!

The day was so dark that workmen excavating the cellar of Major Wilder's new home were compelled to stop their labors!

As the darkness deepened, thousands all over New England became convinced that the "Day of Judgment" had arrived! In the Connecticut Legislature, as Whittier records, Abraham Davenport, addressing the frightened Assembly gave this command — "Bring in the candles!"

Apparently the little known Major Wilder had the same spirit as the famous Davenport - and knew his duty in a time of alarm. Each in his own way made the same decision: To build in the dark and leave the future with God!

The lesson is one we would do well to keep in mind today. As we look over the world situation in our times, it is easy to become distressed and despondent. There is a story of a teacher who asked a small boy in her classroom, "Johnny, what is the shape of the world?" And Johnny replied, "My father says the world is in a terrible 'shape'".

Perhaps the teacher and the small boy were not thinking of the same thing—but, in any event, there is a world of meaning in Johnny's answer. Among the nations and in the lives of countless individuals, there are times when 'dark days' come, and everything depends on how we react to such trying situations. To yield to despair when darkness descends does not help at all — indeed, it makes matters worse! There is a way to make the best of the darkness—

"Who is among you that feareth the Lord...
That walketh in darkness, and hath no light?
Let him trust in the Name of the Lord,
And stay upon his God."
(Isaiah 50:10).

So the Secret of Success is to turn from darkness to Deity - and gloom becomes a corridor to God. To the man without faith in the Lord, darkness develops despair, but the one who trusts in God can say with the Psalmist—

"He made darkness His Secret Place". *(Psalm 18:11).*

"*The* Lord God will enlighten my darkness". *(Psalm 18:28).*

And the Christian hears the words of Jesus Christ - "*I am the light of the world. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of Life.*"
(John 8:12).

When the Chinese created the characters for the word, "Crisis"- they took the character which means "danger", and the one which means "Opportunity", and put them together, and out of this union made a new word, "Crisis".

Surely there is an inspiring lesson for us in this fact. Danger may be the door to deliverance. Hardships may even produce hope! Sorrow may end in song! And trial may lead to triumph!

A great host of men and women know what it means to have "darkness" descend upon them—the darkness of failure in one form or another; the darkness of bereavement; the darkness of physical handicap; the darkness of frustration year after year; the darkness of financial worries; the darkness of loneliness in advancing years; the darkness of prolonged mental depression; the darkness of profound concern over a dear one; the darkness of personal wrong doing.

In the scores of letters which come to me daily, I can testify that each "darkness" is no mere figure of speech — but a tremendous reality — and I would not dare to reply to such messages unless I could suggest the real solution to such problems.

Philosophy is good, psychology is helpful, psychiatry is fine, but above and beyond all else is faith in the Living God.

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee." (Isaiah 26:3).

Religion is the best known therapeutic because it sends through our minds the cleansing, healing, keeping power of God.

"*For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying,*

'Fear not; I will help thee.'"
(Isaiah 41:13).

"God will help you!" Remember this;
It will change your burden to bliss,
And give courage in place of fear,
As you realize He is near!

"God will help you!" The words Divine
With Heaven's encouragement shine!
Let this assurance life transform--
The Lord will keep you safe from harm!

"God will help you!" Just to believe
This promise means you will receive
New joy, new strength, from one above
Who crowns His helpfulness with Love!

We all have our struggles, and days when darkness descends upon us. Life is not easy for any of us; or, if it is, we are not making much of it! For the vast majority of people life is far from being an unbroken sequence of pleasant happenings. Many of those whose names are famous today knew failure personally, but they did not allow either difficulty or defeat to hold them back from ultimate victory.

Samuel Morse was derided by both press and Congress, but today the click of the telegraph is heard the world over. Alexander Bell was called "a fool" in Philadelphia when he exhibited his telephone at the Centennial Exposition. It was even suggested the whole thing was a trick, and someone talked through "a hole in the wire." Today we talk around the world by means of his invention.

McCormick's first reaper was held up to ridicule as a cross between a wheel barrow and a broken-down flying machine. But he went on despite opposition to win the gratitude of farmers everywhere as a benefactor to agriculture.

When Westinghouse proposed to stop a railroad train with air brakes he was described as "a fool trying to stop a train with wind." Today the air brake is universally used.

Robert Fulton had only words of discouragement from those who watched him work on his steamboat. They called it, "Fulton's Folly" and prophesied he would blow himself and his boat out of the water. Today steamboats cross the seven seas.

Madame Curie sorted through tons and tons of waste material in search of radium. The crowd laughingly asked, "What is radium?" They described her as "a woman with a mistaken idea, looking for something that does not exist, and she would not know what to do with it if she found it."

Today the whole world thanks God for the courage and faith and persistence of this remarkable woman. These are but a few names from a long and thrilling list of men and wo-

men who refused to give up when the darkness of disappointment and difficulty descended upon them.

Let us find new hope and confidence as we read these stories of men and women who refused to yield to despair, who worked steadily through the darkness and received their reward as black failure changed to bright success.

"To see the advantage in disadvantage is worth ten thousand pounds." So wrote Hume. That is no exaggeration, but an understatement! "To see the advantage in disadvantage" is to possess the key to life's transformation and victory! And in spiritual matters the same holds true. There are those whose arguments reveal that they believe in God only when skies are bright, and everything looks favorable. Troubles of any sort lead them to doubt God. They remind us of the story regarding the small boy who prayed just before Christmas - "O Lord, please send me a train that runs on real tracks; also an automobile, and an airplane, and a cowboy suit, complete with guns. If I get these things for Christmas, I will believe in you, and keep on praying. If I do not get them, then I am through, and will not pray any more."

This alleged incident would be extremely serious in the life of a young person; and it becomes unspeakably sad when we remember that many men and women reveal this childish attitude toward God.

The Lord of the Universe is too great to be portrayed completely in good weather. As one put it: "The times that try men's souls are the times when God reveals Himself most clearly and most wonderfully."

One sometimes hears Christian people say with resentment after a trying experience, "Why should this thing have happened to me? I pay my bills, I live a good moral life, I go to church, I pray each day and I try to help others, yet this has come upon me."

There is more than disappointment in these words — there is a declaration that God is unfair, and has failed to keep His part of a bargain. Oh, the folly of such childishness toward God! There is no Scriptural promise that life will be magically rid of all difficulties when we trust the Lord.

Religion is not an insurance policy against trial! Let this be clearly understood — God saves His people not from trouble but in trouble!

"Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all."

(Psalm 34:19).

It is not what comes to you, but what you do with it that makes all the difference in your life.

The promise God makes to those who trust Him is, "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee. And through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shall not be burned--neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour. . . ." *(Isaiah 43:2 and 3)*.

To all waiting, willing, obedient souls God gives power to meet all things victoriously. Remember the words of Francis De Sales:

"Do not look forward to the changes and chances of this life in fear; rather look to them with full hope that, as they arise, God, whose you are, will deliver you out of them. He has kept you hitherto - do you but hold fast to His dear hand, and He will lead you safely through all things; and, when you cannot stand, He will bear you in His arms. Do not look forward to what may happen tomorrow; the same everlasting Father who cares for you today will take care of you tomorrow, and every day. Either He will shield you from suffering, or He will give you unfailing strength to bear it. Be at peace then and put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginations."

And whatever the particular form of darkness enveloping you, never forget there is Someone with you at all times! Let this fact give you new courage and confidence.

Comrade of the Shadows as well as the Light
Transforming with glory the darkness of night,
Thy radiant presence brings hope from despair,
Makes the hardest trial become strangely fair!

Comrade of the Shadows as well as the Light
Through Thee we find courage to win in the fight,
And though mists may surround us on every side,
There is Divine Guidance whatever betide.

Comrade of the Shadows as well as the Light
Bringing joy from sorrow, making all life bright,
Accept now our worship for all Thou hast done
Christ our Deliverer, the crucified One!

This is the token of ultimate triumph, and the pledge of abiding victory!

For the darkness shall turn to dawning
And the dawning to noonday bright;
And the Lord turn shadow to sunshine
As He leads to Eternal Light!

oooOooo

A Prayer

I fear we've grown too earthbound, too worldly wise and weak,
And need to bow in humbleness, and Thy holy guidance seek.
Dear Father, grant us heavenly light that we may find the way.
That leads to paths of righteousness, for this we daily pray.
Help us to be more conscious of Thy all-abiding love,
That earth may be a place of peace, like that of heaven above.
Grant us clear minds to understand the greatness of Thy power,
And give us strength to bear the weight of every trying hour.
Light, power and love we need from Thee, to build a better plan
On earth, and here restore, the brotherhood of man.

-- *Anna M. Carroll.*

oooOooo

RENAISSANCE

This season when each flower and leaf unfold,
And from the tomb of earth, life springs anew,
The winter's darkened night now dawns in gold,
And God's eternal beauty fills man's view.

-- *Zelma Dennis.*

* * *

RE-THINKING MISSIONS

ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE SCOPE

By William Ernest Hocking, D.D.

(Cont'd from December issue)

There has come an awakening of interest in the quality of life led by the people in the extensive rural areas of the Orient. They are restless in the desire to attain better standards. In China there are over a million villages, and eighty per cent of the immense population of that country live in them; in India the villages number three quarters of a million and contain ninety per cent of the people; in industrialized Japan, about half of the population is rural.

It is with regard to these vast peasant populations that we are compelled to recognize the interdependence of every aspect of human life. Pressure of population upon subsistence, religious beliefs which urge forward the growth of population, poverty, malnutrition, brevity of life, early maturity, the social lag of women, absence of opportunity for education of children, tenacity of custom constitute a cycle of conditions each of which confirms and is confirmed by the others. The chief difficulty is not their numbers but the fact that it is useless to attempt an improvement at any one point without attacking the others also.

There have been intensified efforts to preach the Gospel to the villages, experiments to improve the productivity of agriculture, establishment of health centers, forming of cooperative societies, opening of schools for children and for adults--all have a limited and local value; taken together they reach better results; but all told they have had very restricted promise. The added element of hopefulness in the present situation is that in all these countries governments have begun to concern themselves with the conditions of rural life, and at the same time to perceive that no government can do all.

No increase of economic values, no improvement in the vital statistics of villages will persist without a corresponding step forward in the morale. There must be a change in the spirit of village life, carefully conserving its elements of moral strength; there must come a new sense of moral responsibility and a capacity for association across clan lines without breaking the sanctity of the family; there

must be a release from superstition without loss of religion. There must be better nourishment and health; but there must also be better hope, both economic and spiritual, and a better spirit of brotherhood. If, in the immense rural stretches of Asia, the gradual growth of intelligence and power is to be joined with an equal growth of discontent and hatred, the newly awakened aspiration of these millions may bear bitter fruit. If on the other hand to these stirring villages can be brought the picture of a long struggle upward, in mind, in body, in property, the outlook for civilization is improved.

The crucial problem is, how to accomplish such an immense undertaking. Nothing could be a more legitimate function of the Christian mission than to have a part in this labor if it were prepared to do so. At present, in our judgment, it is not prepared. If the work cannot be done by a method of evangelization which begins and ends with preaching, nor by the formation of a rural church of the old type, neither can it be done by piecemeal, ill-devised starts in unrelated directions of social uplift. It must be essentially a co-operative effort in which the spirit of the mission, the inherent vigour of these ancient cultures, the specialized knowledge of experts, and the resources of government are brought into effective working union. If the American missions are to qualify for even a minor role, they must be prepared to understand and work with the other three factors. They must begin with patient experimentation and with the equally patient training of persons, not numerous, qualified for such leadership.

America has such men and women. While the native worker in the East has an advantage over any foreigner, and the work in its magnitude must be carried out by Orientals, there are born rural leaders, having the first-hand feel of country life, knowing the problems of their own villages and ways of meeting them, who are able to adjust their experience to widely different conditions of the East. *SUCH* persons can retain a highly serviceable initiative even in countries not their own.

Growing out of these tasks there are others, relating to the wider social and political order in which village and city, industry and home are enmeshed. Protestant Christianity has been but dimly aware of the extent of its concern in these issues.

Missions have habitually concentrated attention upon the personal life of individuals and have moved out gradually from that center. This has been their principle of selection in dealing with the appalling mass of human need. They have first attacked the grosser evils, ignorance and disease, because these are the most evident impediments to personal growth. Their activities of teaching and healing happen to be at the same time activities in which the personal factor is a decisive element in success, and in which therefore the spirit of the action most readily transmits itself. Missions have always engaged in the immediate aid of distress. They have played a distinguished part in public emergency as famine, or floods of central China.

By beginning in this way at the personal center and the relief of obvious ills before developing completer social programs, the missions have followed a natural order of imperativeness and also of certainty. For such relief is always more unquestionably beneficial than positive social constructions, whose total effect may remain an unfinished problem of scientific theory. It is not surprising that the mission is conspicuously fitted only for the former kind of work.

Neither church nor mission, however, will be permanently content to serve solely as a general social ambulance corps, since this work will gradually be taken over by other agencies. They are now answering the need for experiment and for pioneering. What is needed is a preparation of the minds of the people for an innovation which must be implemented by government; the mission, through winning confidence, can bring that goodwill which the state alone cannot command. This confidence can be had and kept only through that genuine and courageous love of the people which should be everywhere the marks of the Christian.

Henry Ford once said—

"Coming together is a beginning;
Keeping together is progress;
Working together is success."

oooOooo

LOOK UP

One needs to pray daily for a renewal of faith, trust, confidence, and a firm belief that "all things work together for good to those who love God."

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

The spiritual has to overtop the material. One has to "look up, not down; look out, not in; forward, not back; and lend a hand." Every twinkling star in its galaxy of millions, each kept in place by the hand of Divinity, should prove that there is One greater than man, who is guiding the thoughts of men toward a higher, nobler purpose in this universe. Each star plays the part assigned it; lights the spot God intended it should; asks no questions; simply attends to its own allotted space wherein it remains steadfast and immovable.

Keep looking up,
There is a star just for you,
A star to guide and light your way
When feet would stumble
And quite give way
To doubt and fear—
Remember, God is always near.
He keeps His star-lamps shining bright;
Look up, not down, and see the light.
Look up, not down;
Look forward, not back;
God's hand is not slack;
His ear is not deaf,
Nor His eyes unseeing.
Have faith. Trust, believe.
Do not falter. Do not grieve.
Look up, not down;
Look out, not in;
Look forward, not back,
And lend a hand!
If you follow this motto
From day to day,
You will always find God,
And a star to light your way.

-- *Ae'lis Churchill Chaphe.*

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THE LIFE OF PRAYER

By Robert Wells Youngs, D.D.

Text—Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

We commonly talk about three lives; physical life, which is the life of the body; intellectual life, which is the life of the mind; and spiritual life, which is the life of the soul. *PRAYER* is a matter of spiritual life, the life of the soul.

Most people hold a limited view of prayer. They think of it as an activity of spiritual life. But prayer is not activity of spiritual life; it *is* spiritual life, the life of the soul. "Prayer", as Carlyle so well defined it, "is the aspiration of the soul toward its Heavenly Father."

Prayer is so much the life of the soul that we can measure the growth, development and maturation of one's spiritual life by one's capacity for prayer. We have a prayer quotient which indicates our spiritual age in much the way that an IQ indicates our mental age. A person with undeveloped prayer life is a person with low PQ. He never has grown up spiritually. Such a person is as pitiful as a physical midget or a mental moron, for where the mind of the moron has not responded to sense perception, experience and education; where the body of the midget has not responded to nourishing food, exercise, fresh air and sunshine; the soul with undeveloped prayer life has not responded to God.

Mention one spiritual giant who is not a champion of prayer—one Martin Luther who cannot say (as Martin Luther did say): "I am so busy now that if I did not spend two or three hours each day in prayer I could not get through the day." — one Francis of Assisi whose prayers are not used still in the richest liturgies of the Church — one Brother Lawrence whose life is not one continuous prayer in the presence of God. Capacity for prayer indicates the spiritual age of the soul.

Fortunately, we can raise our Prayer Quotient just as we can raise our IQ. We can

develop from childishness to adolescence, to maturity in spiritual life, just as we can in physical and mental life. Let us divide the life of prayer into three stages:

The most primitive stage might be called the "gimme" stage, where prayers consist of nothing else than "gimme this and gimme that."

There is nothing infantile in making one's wants known to God. Prayers of petition may be found among the devotional utterances of the most mature souls. Jesus said, "ask and ye shall receive." Answers, even miraculous answers, have been received by those who have implored God's help.

Five years ago, *The Broker*, a commuter train, crashed through a trestle near Woodbridge, New Jersey. It was one of the worst train disasters in history. That night, Roger Squire, a Methodist minister, in Locust, New Jersey, heard about the tragedy over the radio. Noting down the names of his parishioners who were among the victims, he started out to call at the homes involved. He came to the home of Bob Stout. He found Bob's wife Mildred who, with her husband, sang in the choir. He prayed with her and then went on to other homes. Meanwhile, Mildred drove to Woodbridge in search of her husband. What had happened to him? Where was he? Near the scene of the accident, she joined other wives who waited — waited while acetylene torches cut away the debris, while ambulances carried away the mangled and dead, while a loud speaker told where the bodies were being taken. At last, at 12:30 a. m., Bob Stout's name came over the speaker. He was in the Perth Amboy General Hospital. His skull was fractured, his condition was critical. He responded to no tests, no stimuli. Wednesday passed, Thursday, Friday, Saturday. Bob remained unconscious. Every feeble pulse beat, every faint breath could have been his last. Then an eminent neurosurgeon was called in. He scheduled an exploratory operation for Sunday noon. He offered no hope—the risk was great, the chances slim. Meanwhile, Mildred Stout remained in prayer at her husband's side.

Sunday morning, 11 o'clock, an hour before the operation, the congregation of the Locust Methodist Church began its worship. The order of worship had been sent to the printer before the accident, which explains that 11:15, the congregation came to a line in the worship which read: *Solo—"Trust in*

Him" — sung by Mrs. Robert Stout. At that point the pastor said, "It is 11:15 Bob Stout will soon undergo an operation. I think Bob and Mildred would like to know we are praying for them." Every mind concentrated on God and Bob Stout as the pastor knelt and prayed. It was 11:20 when Roger Squire finished his prayer with these words: "Now, Master, lay your hand on Bob Stout's brow and heal him." The order of worship was resumed. After the service, the minister went to his study where the phone was ringing. It was Mildred Stout, calling from the hospital. "There's no medical explanation for what has happened", she reported, "but a little while ago Bob opened his eyes and was conscious — the doctors have called off the operation." The pastor talked with Mildred and said, "What time was it when Bob opened his eyes—did anyone notice?" "Yes", said Mildred, "It was 11:20". Answers, miraculous answers, are received by those who make their wants known to God.

"More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?"

Nevertheless, to lift one's hands in prayer, both for oneself and friend, while it may mean that one is better than a sheep or a goat, can mean that one is in the "gimme" stage of prayer life. "Gimme" prayers reveal all the traits which characterize children. They are *selfish*—thinking of God only for what they can get out of Him. Moreover, "gimme" prayers are naive and superstitious—they treat God as an Aladdin's lamp—rub Him with the right words and your wish will come true. Furthermore, "gimme" prayers reveal an *infantile conception* of God. They tell Him what He doesn't need to be told—they ask of Him what He already is going to give. They show no appreciation for the love and concern of God for His creatures. Little children are usually like that.

A disastrous drought was laying waste the sheep country of Australia when a clergyman appeared at a rancher's door and offered to pray for rain. "Listen", said the rancher, "listen to the pant of the sheep. Can you pray better than that?" It is not necessary always to be asking God for something; to make

prayer exclusively a way of meeting our needs. He can hear the pant of the sheep.

Those whose spiritual maturation keeps pace with their mental and physical growth gradually enter a second stage of their prayer life—a stage in which prayer is a *force* in their life. We are growing up spiritually when our prayers advance beyond our need for material and physical handouts from God to our need for spiritual help, for the strength, wisdom, joy, serenity, confidence, peace and guidance which come as by-products of talking with God and communing with Him. Let me give you an example of the difference between the "gimme" stage and the power stage of prayer.

During World War I a surgeon in the German army was wounded so severely in the arm that it had to be amputated. There was no use in praying for the arm. It was gone. Instead, the surgeon prayed for power to bear his affliction and for wisdom to make an adjustment, with the result that he was led into the field of psychiatry where he became pre-eminent. One is growing up spiritually when he can pray for that kind of help rather than for material and physical handouts.

Those who fulfill the conditions of prayer in this second stage of prayer life will tell you of an inner exhilaration which can be found no where but in a life of prayer. Martin Luther said, "Truly prayer is a powerful thing because it links us in spite of our weaknesses and mortality, to God's immeasurable power."

But the life of prayer is still stunted if it stops at this second stage. Outgrowing a prayer-life which seeks God for material and physical handouts and growing into a prayer-life which seeks the spiritual strength of God still leaves us rather immature spiritual beings. In human relations, what are we if we seek one another for the benefits which will be derived, and for no other reason Prayer is power and it is a means of miracles; but, above and beyond all else, prayer is a way to love and adore God.

The passage from Ephesians where our text is found, gives us Paul's reason for praying "For this cause", writes Paul, "I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Then Paul mentions certain spiritual benefits which accrue in a life of prayer—benefits of wisdom, faith, love, and power, until he comes to the text of this sermon: "Now unto him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all

that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." That is the essence of mature prayer—it is our spirit in continuous communion with a Spirit that can do more than we *ask*, according to the *power* that worketh in us, but it is not for the sake of what God can do or for the sake of His power in us—it is for God's glory.

O Thou by whom we come to God,
The Life, the Truth, the Way,
The path of prayer Thyself hath trod,
Lord, teach us how to pray.

SCarsdale 3-4567

In June, 1955 FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER, under the heading, "SCarsdale 5-2460," carried a story of the installation of the Prayer Phone as a 24-hour, 365 days a year, public service from the Hitchcock Memorial Church, Scarsdale, N.Y.

Under "Interesting People" in the April issue of The American Magazine is a late report on the success of the Prayer Phone. This is only one of a number of articles which have appeared in print citing the rapid increase in the number of calls which have risen to three thousand in a 24-hour period.

In regard to this gratifying use of Prayer by phone, Dr. Robert Wells Youngs has said, "Many writers who interview us regarding the Prayer Phone want to know what miracles it has wrought. It has wrought none, so far as I know. We do have, however, the testimony of scores of people that our prayers on the phone have sustained the grief-stricken in an hour of sorrow; calmed the hysterical in an emergency; encouraged the faltering in frustrating circumstances; and steadied the shaken in a tragedy. The prayers which Dr. Frank L. Gosnell prepares so carefully for our phone are not asking for miracles; they are putting us in contact with Him who is the source of all power."

A new number was given for the Prayer Phone when it became necessary to increase the number of instruments to handle the calls. It is Scarsdale 3-4567.

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A Theory of Life

By

G. Wallace Tibbetts

The unselfish service we give to others often wins their respect and affection. We do not strive to guide or influence those whom we serve or please, yet sometimes we realize responsive ideals have been awakened.

As thoughts about us go out, either spoken or written, we grow more intelligently effective in honoring spiritual values.

Like some plants we need rain and sunshine: tense experiences and hours of inspiration.

Fertile virtues in the hearts of our cherished loved-ones, our sincere friends and our companions, receive the seeds of love and faith we scatter; then growth and blossoms appear. Such flowering brings happiness to all of us, and we, through any gracious help or kindness tendered, gain greater strength and more forceful power for goodness, faith and truth.

oooOooo

RESURRECTION

Out of the snow come the violets,
Sweeter because they were hidden away;
Out of the soil that is damp and cold
Come forth the daffodils crowned with gold;
Folded, the lilac buds, close and tight,
That some day will burst in sweetest delight;
Everything lovely bides its time
Waiting the signal of Spring's golden chime;
Hearts that are saddened and broken with pain
Will open to love like flowers after rain;
The meadow lark, primrose and grasses green,
The rills and the brooklets will sparkle again;
Resurrection and life from death and the tomb;
Easter-sweet flowers will open and bloom;
Everything lovely in heaven and earth
Will once more return with Springtime's rebirth.

-- *Ae'lis Churchill Chaphe.*

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A STANDING CHALLENGE

In March, 1778, two years after the birth of the USA as a nation, Benjamin Franklin made this significant comment in a letter that he sent to the government of France:

> *"He who shall introduce into public affairs the principles of primitive Christianity will change the face of the earth."*

Fortunately for us, the truths of Christ are eternal and therefore the same today as they were 1900 years ago. But very seldom in history have a large number of individuals taken the trouble to bring into government, education, and other important areas the divine solution for the problems that vex mankind.

It is a breathtaking challenge to realize that here in the twentieth century each of us can still do something worthwhile in blending these sublime truths into human affairs and thus do much to bring about the lasting peace for which all men yearn.

Yes, you have the opportunity to play some part, however small, in bringing into the market-place the changeless truths that are so much needed in our changing times.

Think often of the forceful reminder of Benjamin Franklin that whoever plays such a role *"will change the face of the earth."*

(From The Christophers)

oooOooo

THE WAY TO PEACE

Dear Lord, we ask Thy guidance
  In this troubled world today;
Amid the strife and chaos,
  Be Thou our strength and stay.
As we implore Thee, Father,
  We pray that warfare cease,
And offer this petition—
  May the nations seek *Thy* Peace.
We know now what is needed
  To unite this world today;
All earthly schemes have failed us—
  Thy way is still The Way.

-- W. J. Thompson.

* * *

VENTURING INTO LIFE

I ventured into this world without a thing.
I started my career on less than a shoestring.
I brought nothing with me,–
No clothing,
No food,
No money.
And I was a stranger in a strange land.
I didn't know how to speak the language.
To make my wants known, I would rely on lung power.
I had to have a special diet because I had no teeth.
I was unable to fend for myself.
I knew no manual skills.
Bathing myself was something I didn't think of trying.
I couldn't even walk.
But some kind person took an interest in me.
I learned later that she called herself my mother.
Sometimes I made life difficult for her.
When she wanted to sleep, I would cry for attention.
In many ways I interfered with her plans.
In spite of it all, she still cared for me.
It must have been my helplessness that appealed to her.
But she said it was because I belonged to her.
I think God must be like her.
So I come to Him in my weakness, my poverty and my perverseness.
I know that I am His child and that He cares for me.

-- *Ralph S. Thorn.*

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In Memoriam

RUTH CRANSTON

Mrs. Ruth Cranston, writer and lecturer on religious subjects and long a contributing editor of Fellowship in Prayer, died in New York City, April 2nd, while on a lecture tour.

Mrs. Cranston's last letter to Fellowship in Prayer came in February from her home in Sierra Madre, California, bearing a tribute to the memory of our Founder and late Executive Secretary, Carl Allison Evans. She lamented the fact that she had done so little writing of late for Fellowship in Prayer, having been so busy with matters concerning her recent book, "The Miracle of Lourdes" which had brought a tremendous volume of correspondence. The book had just been awarded honors by the Christophers, a movement under Roman Catholic auspices, which gives these annual awards to those using "God-given talents in a positive way". Mrs. Cranston had spent a year in France and wrote the book which dealt with the cures accomplished at the Shrine in Lourdes.

Ruth Cranston was a Methodist, born in Cincinnati, Ohio, the daughter of the late Bishop Earl Cranston, who was in charge of missionary assignments for the Methodist Episcopal Church. She was educated by private tutors in France and Switzerland and received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in 1908 from Goucher College in Baltimore.

In 1937 Mrs. Cranston wrote "The Story of Woodrow Wilson", a biography. She had attended college with Mr. Wilson's daughters and had close knowledge of the Wilson family.

She spent ten years in Geneva, working with affiliates of the League of Nations and helped to organize the World Foundation.

In 1946 Mrs. Cranston directed the World Faiths 'Round Table series at Town Hall, designed to understand the religion and cultures of other lands. She was the author of "World Faith," a history of the major religions.

Our heads are bowed in gratitude to Ruth Cranston for her help and contributions to Fellowship in Prayer. She, too, left us a challenge—for her every effort was prayerfully directed toward a harmonious world through faith.

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BIRTH AND DEATH

By Harry Halsey Starrett

Birth and death are the portals of entry and departure in man's sojourn upon this earth.

Heaven is man's natural home his fundamental and highest estate. Man leaves his heaven home to go to a far off country, to gather the fruits of experience. He comes into this world through the portal of entry which we call birth. As he enters this world he puts on the robe of mortality which he wears all through his stay upon this earth. After gathering all the fruits he can bear, he lays off his robe of mortality and, clothed in his pure, undefiled garment of Immortality, he passes through the portal of departure which we call death, on his way back to his real home. There he again abides under the wing of The Almighty, in peace and in joy unspeakable, surrounded and welcomed home by his loved and loving ones who have made the journey through this physical world and who have returned home a little in advance of their fellow-sojourners.

Death is not the end but it is rather, a beautiful transition from illusion to REALITY: from the temporal to the ETERNAL; from mortality to IMMORTALITY for life is changeless, indestructible and eternal— "the same yesterday, today and forever". From God we come— to God we return. And so death is just a going back home.

As we wend our way through this land of trials and tribulation, which are the fruits we came to gather, may the Living Christ which dwells eternally within all men, be our guiding star through this wilderness of despond, leading us in the footsteps of The Master, back home to "our Father which is in Heaven". As we pass along life's highway, upon this earth, let us scatter seeds of love; of charity; of kindness; of thoughtfulness; of helpfulness; of forgiveness; of benevolence; of selflessness; of altruism. So those who come after us may reap the harvest we have sown and be helped in their spiritual unfoldment and growth so they may, in turn, help others, thereby fulfilling the Master's example, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me". To live our lives unselfishly, sacrifically, for others, is the fulfillment of The Law "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself". May we so live upon

this earth, that, "in departing, we will leave behind us, footprints on the sands of time", for those who come after us to walk in on the path to fulfillment. If we surrender our will to The Divine Will and live in harmony with God's plan, when we come to the end of our journey upon this earth, we will pass through the portal of death with our hearts filled to overflowing with unspeakable joy and thanksgiving for we will see all things in the Light of Truth and through Truth we shall be made free. Through death we come into everlasting life. The first and greatest enemy for man to overcome is self, for in mastering self, he becomes master over all; in overcoming self he triumphs over death.

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APPRECIATION

More than ever are we grateful for the wholehearted support and co-operation of our Contributing Editors. To them and to all others (as listed) whose articles appear in this issue, we extend deep appreciation and sincere thanks.

THE POWER OF PRAYER	*By Nick Kenny (used by courtesy of the Author and The New York Daily Mirror).*
A PRAYER	*By Anna M. Carroll.*
RENAISSANCE	*By Zelma Dennis.*
LOOK UP and RESURRECTION	*By Ae'lis Churchill Chaphe.*
A THEORY OF LIFE	*By G. Wallace Tibbetts.*
A STANDING CHALLENGE	*From The Christophers.*
VENTURING INTO LIFE	*By Ralph S. Thorn.*
PRAY	*By Prof. A. E. Johnson.*

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NOTICES and COMMENTS

ADVISOR HONORED. Our hearty congratulations to Mrs. Ae'lis Churchill Chaphe! Mrs. Chaphe has been awarded the American Poets Cup of 1955. She was accorded this honor by membership vote.

PROFESSOR AND MRS. SHAO CHANG LEE. A certificate of appreciation "in Grateful Recognition of Devotion and Service" was recently presented to Professor and Mrs. Shao Chang Lee by President John A. Hannah of Michigan State University. This presentation was made in recognition of their having established at the University the first International Center and for directing the first International Festival, a project which has "pioneered in bettering international understanding among foreign and American students on the campus and in the state." Professor Lee is head of the Department of Foreign Studies at the University. Both he and Mrs. Lee have long been interested in Fellowship in Prayer and its expansion throughout the world.

PLAQUES OF DURER'S HANDS. We are again reminding our readers of these plaques, created by Helen Dudley Young. Those who have purchased them have been well pleased. They are produced in woodtone as well as coppertone and make excellent gifts at any time. The price is $1.95 each; gift wrapped 25¢ additional. When ordering, please specify your preference as to tone desired.

LETTERS OF APPRECIATION. Letters continue to arrive from the Philippines, England, Europe, the Far East and Near East, expressing tribute to Carl A. Evans and appreciation for his establishment of Fellowship in Prayer. We are grateful, as he would have been, to realize how far its message has reached. The many letters of commendation of the February "Memorial" issue give us inspiration and courage for the future.

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P R A Y

PRAY - and be with God
Here and now, even before Death
Seals thy immortality.

PRAY - and be no one
Through being everyone,
And thus thy veritable self
In the Fellowship-in-Prayer.

PRAY - and cancel by praying
Fear, hate, and all sin,
Sin that cannot be in us
The while we are in God.

PRAY - long enough to invite
The settling of an angel
To the wingway of thy soul.

PRAY - haply without words;
Become the mood of prayer
Whereby the prayer itself
Prays thy heart and mind,
As if leaves sang the tree
And the nesting birds sang both.

PRAY - and be with God,
Here and now, even before Death
Seals thy immortality.

-- *A. E. Johnson.*

* * *

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